

Burr Oak Woods

Conservation Nature Center Newsletter

The **Nutshell** ~ May 2010

Aquatic Critters

Have you ever been afraid to walk through a creek because you thought there may be “things” swimming or slithering through the water? It would be disgusting and frightening if you felt something slide past your leg, right!? Actually aquatic life is an indicator that a stream is healthy. Most of us believe that if a stream looks clear and clean it must be uncontaminated. However, even the clearest water may be polluted with chemicals that could prevent aquatic life from flourishing.

Aquatic critters are placed into three groups based on water quality. The first group is pollution sensitive organisms. This includes caddisfly larvae found in good quality water. This water insect would not be able to tolerate much pollution and would quickly die if the water became polluted. The second group is somewhat pollution tolerant organisms, like crayfish, found in good or fair quality water. These waters are like so many of our ponds, rivers and streams in Missouri. The third group of aquatic critters is pollution tolerant organisms, like leeches. Leeches can be found in any quality of water, but are one of the few aquatic critters that can thrive in stagnant or polluted waters.

If you are curious to find out if your favorite stream is healthy enough to support pollution sensitive critters, grab a magnifying glass and a net if you have one and get outside and explore!

Caddisfly larvae, for example, are aquatic critters can be found hiding under rocks or will burrow into the bottom of the creek. They are usually no more than one inch long and can camouflage their bodies with naturally occurring items they find in the stream. They do this by using silk that their bodies produce to “glue” small pebbles and sand to their body, making them look like a

tube covered in pebbles. If you are looking for crayfish turn over some rocks, but look closely and quickly because their coloration helps them to blend in with the mud and rocks and once discovered they can disappear just as quickly. Leeches can be found hiding under rocks, wood and leaf debris. They are attracted to movement in the water so they may come out of hiding for you. Leeches can change their body shape so they may appear long and slender, like a worm, or short and oval.

These aquatic critters are vital residents of the food web of a stream. They feed on algae and plant material that fall into the stream, and are an important food source for fish, birds, and amphibians. If the water is clean enough to support these aquatic critters it is clean enough for you to walk through. So next time you come across a cool and inviting stream don't be afraid to wade on in and stroll through the creek with the aquatic critters.

Christie Burkert

If you would like to learn more, sign up for Stream Families on May 12, 5:30 – 7:30p see details on page five.

Outdoor Skills Adventure registration begins Tuesday, May 18 at 8:00a

see details on page six for information on this great free summer program available for youngsters 8 – 18 years old; individuals with special needs; adults 55 years old and up; and families with children 7 years old and up.



details are on the program pages

Birders

May 5 Wednesday
May 12 Wednesday
May 21 Friday
May 25 Tuesday

**Crash Course
Birding Hike**
Ages 10 and up

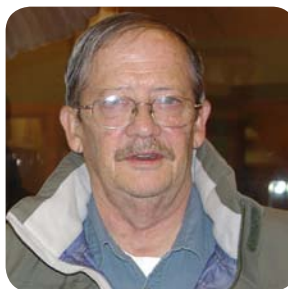
Volunteers

***Congratulations to the Volunteers
receiving the 2009 Burr Oak Woods
Appreciation Awards***



Volunteer of the Year
Michael Coons

Weekend Volunteer
Lorraine Sciara



Weekday Volunteer
Gary Deal

Special Project
Tom Reck



Behind the Scenes
Joe Polka

Individual Interpretive Effort
Pam Bussell



Lake City Shooting Range

28505 E Truman Road, Buckner, Mo 64016

816-249-3149

www.mdc.mo.gov/areas/ranges/lakecity/



Volunteers Wanted

Have you ever thought about Volunteering? Many life experiences can be passed on to others by sharing your experience through volunteering. Lake City Shooting Range and Outdoor Education Center is looking for volunteers to assist in many facets of the outdoors. Do you have an interest in any of the shooting sports? Do you enjoy outdoor recreation or have a craft you are passionate about? Volunteering is a great way to pass your knowledge on to the next generation. Lake City Shooting Range and Outdoor Education Center offers a wide variety of opportunities for volunteers. Share your talent in the shooting sports or hunting. The range needs volunteers to assist in public shooting events and instruct shooting related classes. If you would like to join the Lake City Team come by the facility or call us at 816-249-3149.

May Programs

contact the range for information and registration to the programs listed below.

1 Saturday 9:00 – 11:00a
Family Skeet Shoot

5 Wednesday 9:00 – 11:00a
Youth Air Rifle

13 Thursday 6:00 – 8:00p
Basic of Muzzleloading

15 Saturday 8:00 – 11:30a
Women's Firearm Safety

16 Sunday 9:00 – 11:00a
Family Trap Shoot

EXPLORING A WATERY WORLD

Water is the Driver of Nature.
~Leonardo da Vinci

Do you have a creek, stream, or pond near your home? Have you ever ventured near or even in it? These watery worlds are teeming with life, just awaiting your discovery.

I love to take my boys to the shallow creek behind our house, nestled beyond the trees and the shrubs that hide it. The stream flows quietly, dappled in sunlight and shadows.

We often explore the creek just to see who is there. At our approach, a frog or two will croak and jump in to evade us. We search the muddy banks for the tracks of critters that recently used the creek. We often find tracks of deer, raccoon, and sometimes other visitors. We wade in the water, looking for small fish or tadpoles, and the quick moving crayfish that hide in the shallow pools. In the fast moving riffles, we turn over rocks in

search of aquatic insects such as dragonfly and mayfly nymphs. There are so many little creatures starting their life right here in front of us. In deeper water, a turtle slips into the murky water. Once, we even surprised a non-venomous water snake enjoying a froggy snack. We always leave our little creek wet, muddy and wearing a smile.

I encourage you to be a little adventurous. All you need is an old pair of shoes to protect your feet from jagged rocks and the willingness to get a little wet or muddy. Water is a great place to get up-close to nature in a fun, detective-like way.

Kathleen Savaiano
Naturalist/Mom of 2 boys

P.S. — The water snakes in our area are non-venomous.



Welcome Back Phillip!

**Burr Oak Woods
Conservation Nature Center
newest naturalist**



Hello, my name is Phillip Brinkley. I am the newest Naturalist here at Burr Oak Woods Nature Center and I look forward to meeting you. I have been with the Department of Conservation for a couple of years now, starting out as a part time Education Specialist at the Discovery Center in Kansas City, then a part time Naturalist here. I have spent the last year at the Discovery Center, but now I have arrived in my new home. I graduated from Kansas State University in 2006 with degrees in Wildlife and Fisheries biology. I am a native of Lee's Summit, and have enjoyed the wonders of outdoor Missouri for most of my life. I love to hike, camp, fish, float, and hunt. I am also a musician, playing bass guitar for over 20 years now. I am very excited to be here and I am looking forward to the awesome things we have planned for 2010!

Programs

Please call **816-228-3766** on or after **Saturday, May 1, 2010** to register for the **FREE** programs listed. It is important to arrive five minutes before the program time. If you have to cancel, please call as soon as possible, so someone on the waiting list can attend.

May 1 Saturday 10:00 – Noon

At long Last, Spring Wildflowers

Adults

We have waited a long time for spring! Join a naturalist out on the trails to discover the secret beauty of the native woodland wildflowers. How many species can you find? Please call 816-228-3766 to register upon receipt of this newsletter.

Birders

May 5 Wednesday 8:00 – 10:00a

May 12 Wednesday 8:00 – 10:00a

May 21 Friday 8:00 – 10:00a

May 25 Tuesday 8:00 – 10:00a

yellow-billed cuckoo

Crash Course Birding Hike

Ages 10 and up

YOUNGSTERS 10-15 MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY AN ADULT

May is the best time to bird with migration in full activity. Seeing and hearing many species offers a "crash course" in birding. Both beginners and experienced birders invited. Be prepared to hike off the main trail. Please call to register.

May 6 Thursday 10:00 – Noon

Spring Woodland Tea Room

Adults

Treat yourself to a delightful wild brunch experience. This is a wonderful time of year to search for spring wild edible plants that are a delicious and nutritious addition to your diet. A discovery hike is included. Please call to register.

May 8 Saturday Noon – 2:00p

Where Do the Birds Go?

Families

WITH CHILDREN 5 AND UP

Follow in the paths of our winged voyagers. Many of our native birds migrate between winter feeding locations and summer nesting areas. Join us as we explore where, when, and why these feathered friends travel. Please call to register.

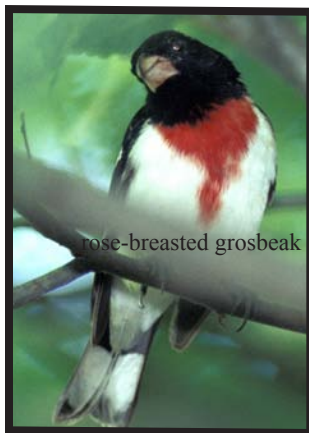
May 8 Saturday 9:00 – 11:00a

Family Fishing

Families

WITH CHILDREN 5 AND UP

It is time to bait the hooks and have some fun at the Burr Oak Woods fishing pond. Volunteer naturalist, Jim Hawes, will teach the basics of fishing, provide equipment and worms, share a few stories, and will do his best to make sure everyone catches fish! Please call to register.



rose-breasted grosbeak

May 11 Tuesday 10:00 – 11:00a

Babes in the Woods: Happy Trails...

Ages 0 – 36 months

Let's break out our sneakers and explore the Habitat Trail. Please meet at the trail parking area and keep in mind this is a wood chipped trail. We'll keep our fingers crossed for nice weather - see you on the trail! Please call to register.



assassin bug

May 12 Wednesday 10:00 – 11:00a

Little Acorns: Insects Are Not Icky

Ages 3 – 5

Don't swat that bug! Insects benefit the earth in many ways. We will set out to explore and learn about our common insects and how they help us and wildlife. Please call to register.

May 12 Wednesday 10:00 – 11:30a

Home School: Reptiles Rock

Ages 6 – 8; 9 – 11; 12 – 18

While the others kids were rockin' round the clock, we were hoppin', bobbin' to the Reptile Rock! Join us as we turn over a few rocks, scout a firewood pile, or peek inside a shell or two to discover the secret life and habitat of the reptiles of Missouri! Please call to register.



young five-line skink

May 12 Wednesday 5:00 – 7:00p

Stream Families

FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN 8 AND UP

Burr Oak Creek needs you! Come out and enjoy a warm spring evening as we work together to make this beautiful little creek an even better place. We will conduct a litter pick up, survey the biological communities, and plant trees to help protect the water and stream bank. Please call to register.

May 15 Saturday 1:00 – 2:00p

Watch Out for that Turtle!

Families

WITH CHILDREN 5 AND UP

Turtles, the beloved slow movin' critter that creeps into our hearts and onto our roads. Learn to identify these ancient harmless critters. Join a naturalist for a discussion about these fascinating creatures. We will spend some time indoors then we will head out for a short hike. Please call to register.



western painted turtle

May 18 Tuesday 6:00 – 8:00p

Conservation Kid's Club: In Wonder of Streams

Ages 7 and 13

What magic is hidden around the next bend? Join the Kid's Club as we explore Burr Oak Creek in search of its hidden wonders. Please call to register.

May 22 Saturday 11:00 – Noon

Springtime in the Woodlands

Families

WITH CHILDREN 10 AND UP

The Bethany Falls rock formations at Burr Oak Woods offer a beautiful backdrop for spring scenery. We will hike to some of these areas to look at the trees and plants that grow on top of the rocky outcrops and search for signs of wildlife that call these areas home. Please call to register.

***Join us as we feed the critters on exhibit at
Burr Oak Woods Conservation Nature Center
on Wednesdays and
Saturdays at 3p.
Every other Friday the
snakes will be fed at 3p.***



May 29 Saturday 8:30 – 4:30p

Junior Girl Scout Badge Day

Junior Girl

Scouts

Calling all Junior Girl Scouts! Burr Oak Woods has a fun patch you can earn that is loaded with activities and also fulfills badge requirements for eight other Junior badges! A total of six activities completed will earn the Burr Oak Woods Fun Badge. Each activity is about an hour in length. Troops or individuals may attend all day or just one activity. Please call to register.



May 29 Saturday 11:00 – Noon

Rockin' & Readin' Nature Tales

Ages 2 and up

Join us for a story hour as we lead you on fantastic nature adventures! We will meet butterflies, birds, mammals, and all sorts of magnificent creatures! We will cross rivers, discover mysteries within the forest, and fly across the prairies. Our imaginations are the only limits. No registration required.

MDC
DISCOVER
nature

MDC
DISCOVER
nature
FAMILIES

**Discover Nature
Families programs are
designed to help adults
and children explore
nature and master
outdoor skills together.**

May 11 Tuesday 6:00 – 8:00p

From Water to Plate

Families

WITH CHILDREN 4 AND UP

Fishing as a family is one of the very best ways that you can teach your children about nature. In this simple activity you will discover firsthand how you fit into nature's food web. We will learn about fish habitat, discover how to fish, and find out how to prepare fish for a delicious dinner. Please call to register.

Outdoor Skills Adventure!

Become a Part of the Outdoor Skills Adventure!

These are free programs!

Registration for Outdoor Skills Adventure will begin at 8:00a on Tuesday, May 18, 2010. Registration will continue 8:00a - 5:00p Tuesday through Friday until the program is full.

****No Walk-in registration will be accepted for this program.**

Questions?

Contact Lisa LaCombe 816-228-3766 or
lisa.lacombe@mdc.mo.gov

If you love to have fun outdoors, and would like to learn new skills, then this program is for you! Teamwork, safety, and leadership will be stressed. Making new friends is encouraged! Join us in June as we learn the basics of these outdoor skills.

Skills are offered as blocks of programs. The morning block will be scheduled from 8:30a - Noon. The afternoon block will be scheduled from 12:30 - 4:00p.

Block I: Air Rifles, Orienteering, Canoeing

Block II: Fishing, Archery, LOST!

Participants will sign up for ½ day block of programs at a time. They may stay for the entire day or attend programs on two different days. The Burr Oak Woods Outdoor Skills Challenge will be offered on Friday, June 11, information will be available at the conclusions of your program block. Teams will work together to demonstrate understanding of their skills, teamwork, and leadership.

We will provide water throughout the day. Participants must bring a refillable water bottle. Participants that stay for the entire day will need to bring a sack lunch that does not require refrigeration. Don't forget sunscreen and insect repellent! Children need to wear sturdy shoes; no open toed shoes, flip flops, sandals, or crocs.

Due to safety of all participants, age requirements are enforced. Parents or legal guardians must fill out and sign an information and emergency contact form for your child. In order for your child to participate in the Outdoor Skills Adventure, you must be registered and have returned a completed form prior to the date he/she is scheduled for the program.

Anyone who arrives after the class has started will not be allowed to attend the class, again due to the safety of all participants. Please arrive on time and pick your children up promptly as the session ends.

Ages 8 – 11 years old

Date	8:30a– Noon	12:30 – 4:00p
June 1, Tuesday	Block I	Block II
June 3, Thursday	Block II	Block I
June 8, Tuesday	Block II	Block I
June 9, Wednesday	Block I	Block II

Ages 12 – 18 years old

Date	8:30a– Noon	12:30 – 4:00p
June 2, Wednesday	Block I	Block II
June 4, Friday	Block II	Block I
June 10, Thursday	Block I	Block II

Outdoor Skills for Special Needs

Tuesday, June 15 is reserved for those outdoor enthusiasts ages 8 and up (or those who would like to be!) that may have special physical or mental needs (guardian/caregiver must attend with participant).

8:30 – 11:30a **Block I: Air Rifles, Canoeing**
12:30 – 3:30p **Block II: Fishing, Archery**

Outdoor Skills for Seniors

Wednesday, June 16 is a special day reserved just for adults age 55 and up, who would like a little adventure. You may sign up for just a ½ day or come out and spend the entire day. Don't miss out on the fun!

8:30 – 11:30a **Block I: Air Rifles, Canoeing**
11:30 – 12:30p **Dutch Oven Cooking and Lunch**
12:30 – 3:30p **Block II: Fishing, Archery**

Discover Nature Families: No Child Left Inside

June 22 through 26 is a week of family programs designed to help adults and children (ages 7 and up) explore nature and master outdoor skills together. All programs will focus on getting families outdoors to explore together!

Date	5:30 - 8:15p	
June 22, Tuesday	Outdoor Cooking	Camping
June 23, Wednesday	Air Rifles	Fishing
June 24, Thursday	Archery	Canoeing

Discover Nature Families: No Child Left Inside

Great American Backyard Camp-out!

Families must attend at least one evening of training programs in order to attend the Great American Backyard Camp-out. Information and registration will be available at the conclusion of programs attended Tuesday through Thursday.

Date	6:00p – 8:00a
June 25, Friday	Great American Backyard Camp-out
June 26, Saturday	Camp-out concludes

Things Coming Up

Outdoor Skills Adventures!

*Registration begins May 18
Tuesday – Friday 8:00 – 5:00p*

WALK-IN REGISTRATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED.

Call 816-228-3766 to register

MAY

Programs taking the summer off

The following monthly programs will take the summer off (June, July, and August)

BABES IN THE WOODS
LITTLE ACORNS
CONSERVATION KID'S
HOME SCHOOL
BIRDERS

*Watch for the September/October
newsletter for topics, dates, and times.*

JUNE, JULY & AUGUST

Newsletter

KANSAS CITY

PREMIERE
EDITION!

We cannot wait to introduce you to our brand new KC Regional newsletter, Kansas City Nature and You! This exciting new publication will highlight Missouri Department of Conservation nature related programs across the entire metropolitan area. You and your family will be able to choose from programs presented at the following locations:

BURR OAK WOODS CONSERVATION AREA AND NATURE CENTER
ANITA B. GORMAN CONSERVATION DISCOVERY CENTER
PARMA WOODS SHOOTING RANGE AND OUTDOOR EDUCATION CENTER
AND THE ALL NEW LAKE CITY SHOOTING RANGE AND OUTDOOR EDUCATION CENTER

Watch for the first edition planned for July/August!

JULY

Go Wild! programs

Presented in July. The Go Wild! programs are designed for the following age groups:

3 - 5 YEARS OLD - PROGRAM LENGTHS AVERAGE TWO HOURS
6 - 8 YEARS OLD - PROGRAM LENGTHS AVERAGE TWO - THREE HOURS
9 - 11 YEARS OLD - PROGRAM LENGTHS AVERAGE THREE - FOUR HOURS
12 - 18 YEARS OLD - PROGRAM LENGTHS AVERAGE THREE HOURS TO THE FULL DAY

JULY

Prairie Day

Prairie Day is scheduled for

SEPTEMBER 2010

*at Burr Oak Woods
Conservation Nature Center & Area*

SEPTEMBER

Natural Happenings



Skunks bear young through early June

Eastern bluebirds begin second nesting the third week of May

Toward the end of May coyote pups begin emerging from dens

Male catfish begin making nests around logs

Spray nuisance pond vegetation before water temperatures reach 70 °

Antlers begin to grow on white-tailed deer bucks



Nature Shop News

Tried & True Missouri Native Plants For Your Yard guide

Tried & True Missouri Native Plants For Your Yard is a new book that gardeners will find indispensable. It features 60 plus pages of 111 wildflowers, ferns, grasses, vines, shrubs, and trees for every imaginable landscape use, with notes on growing needs of each. Gorgeous color photos make it suitable for coffee-table display.

Feature Price

\$4.⁸⁰

Regular price \$6.00

Heritage card discount does not apply.

What's **HOT**
in the Nature Shop!

Save **20%**
May 1 - June 30

Put a little native Missouri back in your yard!

PRSR.T,STD.
US POSTAGE PAID
JEFFERSON CITY MO
PERMIT 274

Burr Oak Woods CNC
The Nutshell Newsletter
Missouri Department of Conservation
1401 NW Park Road - Blue Springs, Mo 64015
Serving nature and you